

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEVADA

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ALFREDO PUENTES,

Plaintiff,

v.

AITOR NARVAZIA, *et al.*,

Defendants.

Case No. 3:19-cv-00600-MMD-CSD

ORDER

Plaintiff Alfredo Puentes brings this civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 to redress constitutional violations that he claims he suffered while a pretrial detainee in the Elko County Jail. (ECF No. 11.) On October 28, 2021, this Court ordered Puentes to file a third amended complaint identifying the name of Doe Defendant by January 25, 2022. (ECF No. 12.) The Court warned Puentes that the action could be dismissed with prejudice if he failed to file a third amended complaint by that deadline. (*Id.* at 11.) That deadline expired and Puentes did not file a third amended complaint, move for an extension, or otherwise respond.

District courts have the inherent power to control their dockets and “[i]n the exercise of that power, they may impose sanctions including, where appropriate . . . dismissal” of a case. *Thompson v. Hous. Auth. of City of Los Angeles*, 782 F.2d 829, 831 (9th Cir. 1986). A court may dismiss an action based on a party’s failure to obey a court order or comply with local rules. See *Carey v. King*, 856 F.2d 1439, 1440-41 (9th Cir. 1988) (affirming dismissal for failure to comply with local rule requiring *pro se* plaintiffs to keep court apprised of address); *Malone v. U.S. Postal Service*, 833 F.2d 128, 130 (9th Cir. 1987) affirming (dismissal for failure to comply with court order). In determining whether to dismiss an action on one of these grounds, the Court must consider: (1) the

1 public's interest in expeditious resolution of litigation; (2) the Court's need to manage its
2 docket; (3) the risk of prejudice to the defendants; (4) the public policy favoring disposition
3 of cases on their merits; and (5) the availability of less drastic alternatives. *See In re*
4 *Phenylpropanolamine Prod. Liab. Litig.*, 460 F.3d 1217, 1226 (9th Cir. 2006) (quoting
5 *Malone v. U.S. Postal Serv.*, 833 F.2d 128, 130 (9th Cir. 1987)).

6 The first two factors, the public's interest in expeditiously resolving this litigation
7 and the Court's interest in managing its docket, weigh in favor of dismissal of Puentes's
8 claims. The third factor, risk of prejudice to defendants, also weighs in favor of dismissal
9 because a presumption of injury arises from the occurrence of unreasonable delay in filing
10 a pleading ordered by the court or prosecuting an action. *See Anderson v. Air West*, 542
11 F.2d 522, 524 (9th Cir. 1976). The fourth factor—the public policy favoring disposition of
12 cases on their merits—is greatly outweighed by the factors favoring dismissal.

13 The fifth factor requires the Court to consider whether less drastic alternatives can
14 be used to correct the party's failure that brought about the Court's need to consider
15 dismissal. *See Yourish v. Cal. Amplifier*, 191 F.3d 983, 992 (9th Cir. 1999) (explaining
16 that considering less drastic alternatives *before* the party has disobeyed a court order
17 does not satisfy this factor); *accord Pagtalunan v. Galaza*, 291 F.3d 639, 643 & n.4 (9th
18 Cir. 2002) (explaining that “the persuasive force of” earlier Ninth Circuit cases that
19 “implicitly accepted pursuit of last drastic alternatives prior to disobedience of the court's
20 order as satisfying this element[.]” *i.e.*, like the “initial granting of leave to amend coupled
21 with the warning of dismissal for failure to comply[.]” have been “eroded” by *Yourish*).
22 Courts “need not exhaust every sanction short of dismissal before finally dismissing a
23 case, but must explore possible and meaningful alternatives.” *Henderson v. Duncan*, 779
24 F.2d 1421, 1424 (9th Cir. 1986). Because this action cannot realistically proceed until and
25 unless Puentes files a third amended complaint, the only alternative is to enter a second
26 order setting another deadline. But the reality of repeating an ignored order is that it often
27 only delays the inevitable and squanders the Court's finite resources. The circumstances
28 here do not indicate that this case will be an exception: there is no hint that Puentes needs

1 additional time or evidence that he did not receive the Court's screening order. Setting
2 another deadline is not a meaningful alternative given these circumstances. So the fifth
3 factor favors dismissal.

4 Having thoroughly considered these dismissal factors, the Court finds that they
5 weigh in favor of dismissal. It is therefore ordered that this action is dismissed with
6 prejudice based on Puentes's failure to file a third amended complaint in compliance with
7 this Court's October 28, 2021, order. The Clerk of Court is directed to enter judgment
8 accordingly and close this case. No other documents may be filed in this now-closed
9 case.

10 DATED THIS 2nd Day of February 2022.

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13 MIRANDA M. DU
14 CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
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